**What risks are involved with the procedure?**

An ultrasound guided liver biopsy is a relatively safe procedure, but with most medical procedures risks and complications can arise. It is expected that there will be a small amount of bleeding from your injection site.

A low risk of continued bleeding from the biopsy site can occur and a blood transfusion might be required. The British Liver Trust states, ‘excessive bleeding can occur in about 1 in 500 to 1 in 1000 people’.

After the biopsy, pain can develop in your right shoulder caused by the irritation of the diaphragm muscle. This pain should disappear in a few hours.

**When do I receive my results?**

The consultant who asked for your test will see you in clinic within two to three weeks to discuss the results of the biopsy.

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**Contact us**

Radiology Department,  
South Tyneside District Hospital,  
Tyne & Wear.  
NE34 0PL  
0191 404 1088

Hours open:  
Monday to Friday 08:30-17:00  
Nurses: 4041000 ext 3171

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**We are committed to raising the standard of written information for patients, their carers, people who use the NHS and the general public.**

This information can be made available in another format or language on request. For further copies of this leaflet please contact on the telephone number above.
Why do I need a liver biopsy?
Your consultant has recommended a liver biopsy following the results of your previous tests.
The purpose of this test is to help to identify the cause of your liver complaint.
The test involves the radiologist passing a needle through your skin and into the liver under ultrasound guidance. Small samples of your liver tissue will be removed and then examined.

What preparation is needed for the liver biopsy?
A radiology nurse will arrange an assessment before your biopsy appointment, which you can attend with a relative or friend. The nurse will explain the test and record all your relevant medical and medication history.
Please tell the nurse if you are taking blood thinning medications or you suffer from allergies.

What happens on the day of the test?
You must not have anything to eat or drink for four hours before the test.
You will be asked to attend ward ______ at _______________________
The ward staff will provide you with a patient gown and they will complete a checklist with you. A hospital porter will take you to the radiology department where you will be welcomed by a member of our nursing team.

What happens during the procedure?
The procedure should take approximately 30 minutes and you will need to lie flat on a trolley. An ultrasound scanner will locate the site of the biopsy. Once the position is confirmed, the radiologist will clean your skin with an antiseptic wash and will give you an injection of local anesthetic to numb the site. You can feel a slight stinging sensation. A biopsy needle no thicker than a blood test needle, but longer in length, is inserted into your skin. You will hear a clicking sound from the biopsy needle when a sample has been taken; this process may be repeated two or three times. If you have pain during the procedure please inform the staff.

What happens after the procedure?
You will return to the ward and remain on bed rest for four hours and your pulse and blood pressure will be regularly checked.
You will be able to eat and drink after the test. When you are fit for discharge, a friend or relative should stay with you for 24 hours or an overnight hospital stay can be arranged.

What happens after discharge from hospital?
Do not do any physical exercise for the first 24 hours. You can remove the dressing the next day and bath or shower as normal.
If you experience any signs of bleeding or extreme lasting pains, you should attend the nearest Accident and Emergency Department and inform staff that you have had a liver biopsy.